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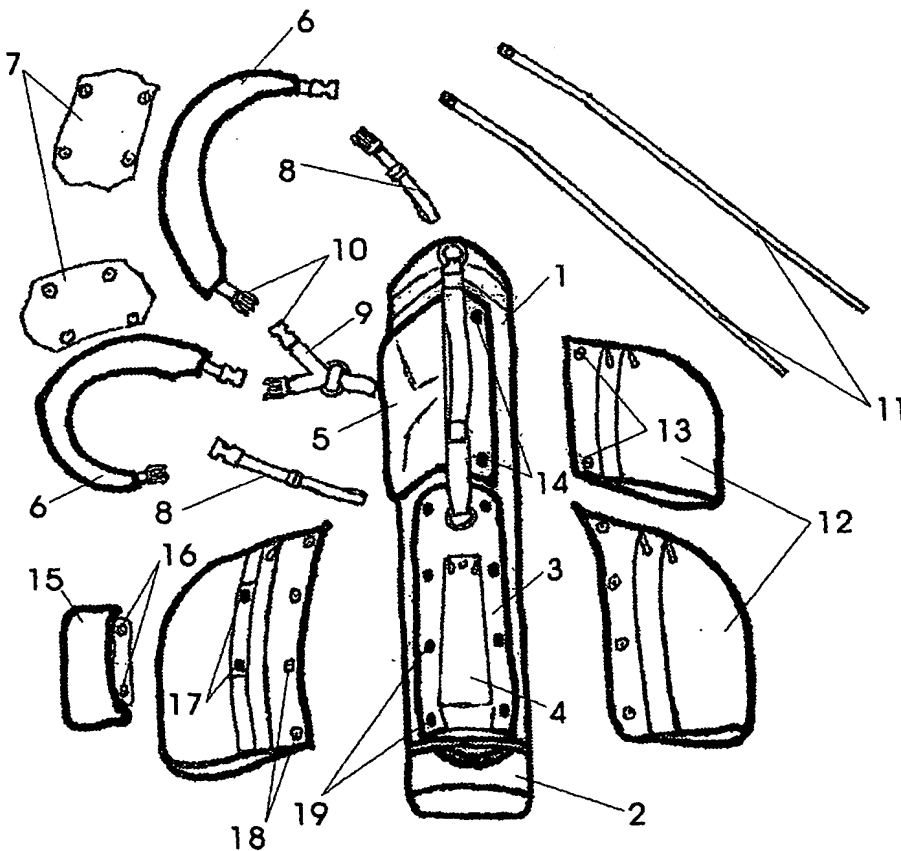
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(54) Title: MODULAR STAND BAG FOR GOLF CLUBS



(57) Abstract: These inventions provide for golf bags, in particular stand type golf bags used in game play are arranged with modular components. These components can be easily switched by a golfer whereby the component may be replaced with one having an alternative function or style. In addition, components subject to damage may be quickly and easily replaced with new components. Golf bags (1) are configured with special fasteners (13, 17) which allow parts to be removably affixed to the bag for the switchable components. Standard materials and fasteners might be used elsewhere on the bag. Golf bag components which are arranged to be changeable include at least: the stand element (11), a back pad, shoulder straps (9) and shoulder moulds (6), and pockets. Kits comprising an upgrade theme are also arranged to cooperate with these bags and to be sold as stand alone products in support of extended uses of bags.

Under the Patent Cooperation Treaty

Applicant Jeffrey Herold

Title: "Modular Stand Bag for Golf Clubs"

Specification

BACKGROUND OF THESE INVENTIONS

Field

The following inventions disclosure is generally concerned with containers for sporting equipment and associated accessories and more specifically concerned with stand bags for carrying golf clubs on the course during play.

Prior Art

The notion of interchanging parts of an article to realize added function is not precisely new. Indeed in the clothing industry, there is opportunity for changing parts to form an altered whole and thereby achieve a new look or function. Similarly, personal telephones now come with kits to redress the appearance at the user's pleasure. At present, one major automobile manufacture is considering a vehicle which has changeable components which may be applied to a common chassis to change a 'car' into a 'truck'. Thus, both the look and function may change as a result of changing various component parts of an article.

With further regard to clothing, a few examples are suggested as follows.

Some outer layer jackets have been configured with removable sleeves. In warmer weather, the top portion of the sleeve unzips from the shoulder and the sleeves may be stored. In this way, a jacket may be transformed into a vest type garment. In another similar example, the interior layer of a multi-layer jacket can be removed. The lining of a ski jacket can be removed to reduce the extent of the insulation. In this way, a single jacket can be used in various weather conditions. Thus, the *function* of an article of clothing is changed in accordance with removable components.

The popularity of mobile telephones leads to a desire to personalize the devices. Some like to express a certain look and style. Therefore, phone

manufactures have created a body portion with a face portion which may be snapped into place but easily removed. Customers may purchase as an aftermarket accessory a new face portion with special indicia and designs. While the design may be pleasing for some time, the novelty tends to fade. After one design is no longer appreciated, the phone user can easily change the look and style of the phone without buying a new phone. Accordingly, the *fashion* of an article may be changed in accordance with removable components which may be switched and combined with a base or body portion.

Although some devices and articles have been designed with components which may be switched with others, there remains apparatus where this has not been attempted and remains completely unknown. For example, when one purchases a suitcase, it comes fully and permanently assembled. There is no opportunity to change the color nor the look; so the buyer selects carefully, a black bag.

A major problem with common golf bags in use today is that these bags are subject to very rough use. Parts of the bag tend to break despite being made from the most durable materials available. In this case, a golfer must send the bag, for example to the manufacture, for repair. When the bag is in its normal service period, these repairs are generally warranty repairs paid for by the manufacture. Since a golf bag is quite large it is problematic when having to return ship a bag to a manufacturer for service. Not only does the golfer find it cumbersome to pack, the shipping company may charge for excessively large sized objects like a golf bag. Further, the shipping and repair time is sometimes quite long. A golfer may expect to be without the service of his bag for several weeks. Accordingly, it is very expensive for both the manufacture and the golfer to have a bag, or part thereof, break. It would be a great benefit to the sport should a solution be found where a broken bag was repaired without large expense and returned to service without long delays. Some of the objectives of the following disclosure are directed to solutions for these problems.

While the systems and inventions of the art are designed to achieve particular goals and objectives, some of those being no less than remarkable, these inventions have limitations. These inventions of the art are not used and cannot be used to realize the advantages and objectives of the present invention.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTIONS

Comes now, Jeffrey Herold with inventions of stand type bags for golf clubs with highly modular removable-replaceable components. Stand bags are used on the golf course for carrying clubs and accessories between holes. Stand bags of these inventions include bags with interchangeable parts. In particular, these bags may
5 include pockets which may be switched to support various carrying capacity. In addition, pockets with a exterior of various colors may be switched to bring about an alternative color scheme. The stand portion may be switched in view of certain preferences which are different from one player to another, or with respect to a player, from one day to another. Likewise, a first strap with a particular size and function
10 may be quickly removed and changed for another strap which supports a caddy of a different size or preference. Thus, bags of these inventions are composed of parts which are easily removed and replaced with others via carefully selected and appropriately arranged fasteners. Special fasteners which allow removal and replacement of these components may include fasteners such as snaps, buckles,
15 'Velcro' type hook and loop fasteners, mechanical interlocking elements, zippers, et cetera. The positioning of these fastener elements is specially arranged to cooperate with the components to be attached; i.e. the fasteners are placed and arranged with complementary patterns and design so that various different components may be affixed to the bag chassis in the same place with the same fasteners.

It is a primary function of these golf club bags to provide interchangeability with regard to the components from which it is made. It is a contrast to prior art methods and devices that known systems do not allow for one to change the function and style of a bag after purchase; one must carefully chose a bag before purchase which satisfies a particular need and has a neutral or modestly attractive look. A
25 fundamental difference between golf bags of the instant invention and those of the art can be found when considering the modular nature and the interchangeability of their components. Accordingly, stand type bags for golf clubs formed of modular components which allow those components to be switched and changed without causing the bag to be shipped to a specialist for long periods of time are first
30 presented herein this disclosure as included inventions.

Objectives of the Inventions

It is a primary object of these inventions to provide golf club bags of a highly modular nature.

It is an object of these inventions to provide golf club bags comprised of components which may be easily removed.

It is a further object to provide golf club bags which may easily change their appearance and style.

5 It is an object of the invention to provide golf club bags which support a highly advanced and sophisticated special warranty service.

A better understanding can be had with reference to detailed description of preferred embodiments and with reference to appended drawings. Embodiments presented are particular ways to realize these inventions and are not inclusive of all
10 ways possible. Therefore, there may exist embodiments that do not deviate from the spirit and scope of this disclosure as set forth by the claims, but do not appear here as specific examples. It will be appreciated that a great plurality of alternative versions are possible.

15 **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES**

These and other features, aspects, and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with regard to the following description, appended claims and drawings where:

Figure 1 is an exploded view of a preferred version of a golf bag in agreement
20 with this disclosure;

Figure 2 illustrates a fully assembled modular golf bag of these inventions;

Figure 3 is another exploded view where alternative components are suggested;

Figure 4 illustrates a chassis component with fasteners arranged to receive
25 pocket components;

Figure 5 shows a detail of a removable pocket being affixed to a special golf bag chassis;

Figure 6 is an example of a removable stud fastener useful to removably couple some components; and

30 Figure 7 illustrates a golfer using one custom configuration of the bag.

PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTIONS

In accordance with each of the preferred embodiments of these inventions, there is provided golf club stand bags having modular components. It will be

appreciated that each of these embodiments described include both apparatus and kits and that the apparatus and kit of one preferred embodiment may be different than the apparatus and kit of another separate embodiment.

Golf bags having modular removable components provide great advantages to the golfer most importantly, but also to the retailer and to the manufacturer. Although the mechanical differences taught here may seem slight to some, the difference these differences make is considerable and not less than remarkable. This can be fully appreciated in consideration of the following three sections.

Golfer Selectable Configuration

Generally, when a golfer selects a golf bag for purchase he considers personal preferences with regard to type of play, desired capacity, design style, among others. Where conflicts arise, compromise is the only solution. While sometimes a very large deluxe bag is desirable, other times a lightweight brief bag is preferred. In the past, it has been impossible to serve both of these conflicting needs. Similarly, a bag having a plush padded dual shoulder strap does not have a single shoulder strap and it may be difficult to carry a dual strap over a single shoulder because the balance is not correct. Where one wishes for a bag having both functions, standard bags fail. Compromise becomes the only solution for such conflicts as a single golf bag cannot address these mutually exclusive properties. Thus, a golfer struggles to find the perfect stand bag which serves all occasions.

Golf bags of these inventions are designed to be reconfigured at will. On one day the bag may be dressed to a full capacity whereby loads of accessories and support equipment may be carried. Other days the bag may be stripped of components to form the most brief and lightweight of bags. Other functions may be changed also. For example, a dual shoulder strap may be switched out for a single shoulder strap. Shoulder molded elements may be changed in agreement with preferences. Pockets may be switched for various carrying and storage tasks. One set of pockets might well serve the task of compartmenting and protecting individual small items, while another might be an unusual shape to hold special objects like an elongated pocket for an umbrella. A back pad may be removably affixed to a bag chassis whereby it can be removed and changed for a different back pad with a preferred characteristic. A premium quality lightweight stand made of graphite might be changed for a standard

aluminum stand. Alternatively, a heavy duty stand might be employed instead where anticipated loads are large.

Configuration is not limited to functional considerations, but rather also include design and aesthetic attributes. While golf bags are known to have attractive and splashy color schema, these schema can become less attractive with age and less undesirable thereby reducing the overall utility of the bag. Bags of these inventions support a change of color scheme. Simple exchange of pockets and other components with new colors creates a new look which can make an aged bag feel new and fresh. As fashion trends change in time, bags which support changes in color schema without replacement of the entire bag will be quite attractive to golfers who do not want to buy a new bag every season to maintain the fashion trend.

Warranty Service

A major problem arises in the normal use of golf bags. These bags are subject to very rough use and even abuse. Golf bags, even those of the highest quality, sometimes suffer damage or breakage. In these cases, the bags must be sent for repair. However, handling such large bags is quite expensive and cumbersome. Shipping for oversized items is not only expensive, but also time consuming. Thus, the long time from which the bag is kept out of service is a great inconvenience to the golfer. Since a manufacturer tends to warranty a bag, the repairs and shipping are generally paid for by the manufacturer. A tremendous operating expense for golf club manufacturers includes the expense associated with warranty repair, in particular, shipping expense. For these reasons among others, it is desirable to provide alternatives and solutions.

To more clearly illustrate this, the following example is provided. If the seam of a pocket which is sewn to a bag catches on a sharp object and begins to tear, the entire 20 pound bag is shipped to the manufacture for repair. In bags having removable pockets, only the pocket is shipped. A pocket may only weigh a small fraction of one pound.

Further, and more importantly, bags of these inventions allows 'forward' warranty service. A customer complaining of a torn pocket can call to request repair. In response, a entirely new pocket can be immediately overnight shipped to the customer. The torn pocket can be returned to the manufacture at the convenience of

the golfer. Thus, a golfer rarely has to go a single day without the complete service of his golf bag. This is absolutely not possible with golf bags in service today.

Retail Inventory

5 Sophisticated retailers are forever mindful of inventory excess. It is important to maintain a stock of items which move frequently. A item which sits on a showroom floor for too long a period costs the retailer in alternatives. To illustrate, one might imagine an item of a particular color which is not very popular. The entire wholesale cost of the item is tied up as inventory expense. For a golf bag, this may be
10 several hundred dollars. Thus a retailer would be reluctant to allocate several hundred dollars to keep in stock a golf bag having a zebra stripe color scheme. Golf bags having a zebra stripe color scheme are quite novel but unlikely to sell fast and in great numbers.

 However, a retailer might be inclined to stock a pocket kit having a zebra
15 stripe color scheme as the pocket kit may only have a wholesale cost of a few tens of dollars. That pocket kit could then be purchased and affixed by the golfer to a special bag having appropriately arranged fasteners in view of the pocket kit configurations. Thus a very special pocket kit could be arranged to cooperate with a bag chassis via predetermined arrangement of special removable fasteners.

20 If a retailer stocks a modest amount of golf club bag chassis, say for example ten, and stocks fifty pocket kits with various color schemes, the retailer has effectively stocked fifty different golf bags at a great reduction in inventory expense. Presently, pro shops wanting to stock bags of fifty different color schema are necessarily required to purchase fifty entire bags at great expense.

25

 These objectives and others which will become clear in view of this entire presentation are met by the arrangements of golf bags described.

 Golf club and accessory bags of these inventions are quite unique in that they are highly modular with modules or components being easily interchangeable. The
30 interchangeable functionality of these golf bags can be executed without special skill or tools and is therefore operable by common users of these bags. These golf bags are comprised of a plurality of components configured for quick and easy change without expertise or complex machine tools.

In general, stand bags are used on the golf course for carrying clubs between holes. Typically, a stand bag is carried over the shoulder or shoulders while the bag is used about the golf course. When removed from the shoulder and set to the ground, a tripod stand automatically deploys to hold the bag in an upright position with the clubs easily accessible as they present from the top.

To support concepts relating to golfer selectable configurations, improved warranty service, and reduced retailer inventory expense the golf bags of these inventions have been created and devised. The following description in connection with the drawing figures will enable persons interested to fully realize the inventions.

In particular, with reference to Figure 1 which is an exploded view of a golf bag and several example components. The chassis of the bag is comprised of a cylindrical member 1 preferably made of a rigid material which holds its shape and is quite rugged. To the chassis, a bottom member is affixed. This fixture is preferably a permanent fixture created with a fastener like glue, sewing or rivets. This is because the bottom is not considered a switchable component. A good bottom design is sufficient for nearly all types of bags and there is little need to replace a bottom element. An attachment facility 3 may also be permanently affixed to the bag chassis member. This device supports fastening means such as snaps or velcro in example in a predetermined arrangement. In preferred versions, it may best be described as a nylon flap with snaps and velcro at its periphery with the velcro on the underside; i.e. the side of the nylon which is closest to the chassis. The attachment facility may be glued or sewn or riveted to the chassis on a vertical line at its longitudinal symmetry axis. A pocket 4 may be permanently affixed atop thereof the attachment facility. Although most pockets are removable and changeable, a permanent pocket is useful in some versions of these inventions which do not exclude where one or more of the pockets are permanently affixed to a portion of the bag.

A special member for helping to ergonomically couple the bag to a user's back while worn at the shoulders is a back pad 5. The pad may be a molded foam material with a prescribed shape and size. It may be coupled to the bag chassis via strong stud elements (detail description follows) at its backside (not shown). Holes drilled or punched into and through the chassis can accommodate such studs whereby the back pad is very securely affixed but remains optionally removable by way of the removable studs.

Padded shoulder strap elements 6 come in various forms. These may include very thick plush pads of circular cross section or may be simple nylon webbing material. Choice of any particular pad configuration may be quite different from one person to the next. It is therefore a major part of these inventions that this portion of the strap be easily and readily changeable with alternative forms of padded shoulder straps.

The shoulder straps may be further improved by shoulder mold elements 7. These elements better and more ergonomically couple the padded shoulder straps to the shoulders. As the shoulders of various persons are highly variable in shape and size from one person to another, these shoulder molds are made to be easily coupled to the shoulder straps whereby they are removable and replaceable with custom shoulder molds particular to a certain golfer. Thus a golfer may choose the precise nature of the shoulder mold without having to change all the other elements of her bag.

Padded shoulder strap elements are further coupled to the bag chassis by way of both bag straps 8 and wishbone strap 9. The bag straps and wishbone strap are preferably connected and affixed to the padded shoulder straps with two piece buckles forming a mechanical interlock. These are generally male and female cooperating elements. By way of simple operation of the removable fasteners, one can replace separate elements of the strap system. It is not necessary to replace the entire strap as it is the case in other systems where permanent non-removable fixtures and fasteners such as glue are used.

When a golf club stand bag is set to the turf, a mechanism at the bottom operates to deploy a stand. Basically, two legs 11 extend away from the longitudinal axis of the bag and form two parts of a tripod stand. The third part of the tripod stand is the bag itself. While aluminum is generally a satisfactory material for stand legs, some persons prefer different arrangements. Players who use bags of very high capacity might not be satisfied with the strength of aluminum legs and would prefer something which offers a bit more stability. For example, legs made of carbon fiber are lightweight and very rigid. Although they are more expensive, they are quite useful in configurations which some golfers demand. In bags where the legs are not removable and changeable, one must buy the rest of the bag configuration which comes with the leg set desired. In bags of these inventions, a user selects any of the particular leg options and combines those with options of other components.

One of the most interesting features of these inventions is realized via pockets 12 which may be replaced and changed with compatible pockets. In particular, preferred bags of these inventions combine an entirely black chassis with colored pockets to form a nice color scheme. By merely changing the colored pockets with pockets of another color, one effectively changes the color of his golf bag without having to buy a new bag. This is very attractive to tournament promoters who might like to issue special tournament pockets. While the special pockets are nice for day-of-the-event promotions, the tournament color scheme might not be as appealing at a later date. The tournament pockets could then be removed, replaced with a neutral color scheme which is attractive to the golfer but doesn't reflect dated material or insignia.

In preferred versions, the pockets are attached to the bag with fasteners which allow the pockets to be removably affixed. In best versions, the male portion of snaps 13 are attached a top strip portion of the pocket. The stripe does not interfere with use of the pocket as access to the pocket interior is made through zipper openings at the sides of the pocket. A flap attachment facility permanently affixed to the bag chassis exterior forms a cooperating portion of the entire fixture. Female portions of snaps 14 are mounted within a flap of cloth material such as nylon which forms the flap. The top strip of the pocket can be slipped under the flap and snapped thereto. In addition, for extra security and neatness, the flap and pocket may also incorporate a common area to which two cooperating hook and loop fasteners are arranged.

It is not only the case that a pocket may be removably affixed to the bag chassis, but some pockets are arranged to be removably affixed to other pockets. A piggy-back arrangement is useful for a special function pocket. Pocket 15 is sometimes used as a 'nutrition pocket'. A food pouch containing sports quality nutrition supplements can be kept in this special pocket. The pocket 'piggy-backs' to another pocket by way of snaps 16, and complementary and cooperating snaps 17. Similarly, the main pocket has cooperating fasteners 18 which affix the assembly to the bag chassis at fasteners 19. The fasteners are arranged in a predetermined pattern and cooperating elements are arranged to fit into that interface. Although the piggy back pocket is very useful for some people, others prefer a different sort of pocket at this location which can easily be accessed while the bag is worn with a double shoulder strap. More details in this regard can be appreciated in further view of Figure 7 described in sections herefollowing.

When the parts of Figure 1 are all nicely assembled together, the bag nearly looks like one of permanent integration. Cosmetically, the bags are similar. However, one can surely now appreciate the advance functionality offered by the bags of the invention. Figure 2 is provided to show how the bag of Figure 1 looks when it is all assembled. Bag chassis 21 has a bottom end 22 and leg stand 23. Padded shoulder straps 24 are wrapped by molded shoulder elements 25. The shoulder straps are connected to the bag by bag straps 26. Colored pockets 27 are attached to the bag by way of attachment facilities 28 which each include a flap, snaps and velcro. A nutrition pocket 29 is attached to a special pocket having thereon another pocket attachment facility.

Figure 3 is quite similar to Figure 1; bag chassis 31 with bottom 32, strap system 33, and legs 34. However, Figure 3 includes a very special elongated pocket 35. This illustrates how various components need only be designed with respect to the attachment facility, including snap pairs 36 and 37, in order that they cooperate with the affixing means. One could use the prescribed snap and velcro pattern to enable a great plurality of pocket or other accessories of various forms to be coupled to the bag. There is no practical limit to the items which may be fastened to such a golf bag.

Figure 4 illustrates a preferred version of a bag chassis 41. The material is a black nylon. Black is chosen because it is a complement of every color. When pockets of virtually any color are affixed to the chassis, the combination results in a very attractive look. Bag stand system 42 in a deployed mode shows how the bag sets when put to the turf bag bottom down. The light duty stand might be replaced with a heavy duty improved stand as it is removably attached to the bag chassis via fasteners which can be operated without special tools or skills. Attachment facility 43 includes a flap of nylon material with snaps and hook and loop type fasteners. Receiving space 44 is arranged to accompany a pocket top strip therein such that the pocket may be affixed to the flap.

A more clear and direct view is expressed as Figure 5. Bag chassis 51 supports removable pockets 52 by way of fastening means including hook and loop strips 53 and snap 54 at the pocket top strip. These fasteners have complementary parts 55 and 56 on the attachment facility affixed to the bag chassis.

As mentioned previously, the back pad is strongly affixed to the bag chassis by way of a removable stud. Figure 6A and 6B illustrate operation of a removable

stud which can be used to affix a back pad to a bag chassis. The stud may have a head 61 or may alternatively be directly integrated with a back pad. Two bendable clasp elements 62 form a mechanical interlock 63 when placed through a hole in a bag chassis 64. Should one desire a new configuration for a back pad, the stud is manipulated such that it can be removed from the chassis. The clasps are squeezed together with pressure 65 such that their keeper ends 66 no longer interlock the hole in the chassis 67 thereby releasing the back pad 68 in the direction 69. A new back pad with appropriately placed studs can be snapped into its place on the golf bag.

Figure 7 illustrates a golf bag in use. Clearly the golfer 71 is quite happy to have such a handsome and highly functional stand bag 72. The golf clubs 73 are nicely held because the correct configuration of back pad (not visible), dual shoulder strap system 74, and pocket set is attached to the bag chassis. Special compartment pocket 76 which is easily accessible while the bag is worn is one of many pocket types which may be affixed into that place on the lower end of the bag. That pocket might be replaced with an alternative pocket thus changing the appearance and function of the golf bag.

The following sections include more precise descriptions of the various components and fasteners useful in highly modular golf bags having interchangeable components.

COMPONENTS

The components of the bag may include but are not limited to chassis, foot or bottom, club divider, retractable tripod stand, pockets and pouches, back pad, attachment facilities, and a shoulder carrying strap. Of these components, preferred versions of the inventions provide for the tripod stand, pockets, back pad, and shoulder strap in particular to be changeable-replaceable components affixed to the bag via fasteners which permit decoupling without destroying the fastener. In preferred versions, the bottom, the club divider, attachment facilities; and sometime at least one pocket, are components which may be permanently affixed to the chassis with fasteners such as glue, sewing, rivets, et cetera.

FASTENERS

Fasteners include those operable by golfers without complex tools or special skills including: hook and loop type strips sometimes known as velcro, snaps,

mechanical interlocking buckles, zippers, removable studs, quarter-turn Allen screw interlocks, among others. These fasteners may be undone and redone without special tools or knowledge. They usually involve a mating pair of mechanical interlocking elements. These fasteners are herein called 'removable' and 'easily removable'. By

5 'easily removable', it is meant that no special or complex tools or procedures are required to remove an article from its fixture and that the fastener is not destroyed in the process of removing. Further, the fastener remains operable such that the component or another component having appropriately placed and cooperating fasteners can be reattached.

10 Common fasteners used on most golf bags of the art which are not appropriate in arrangements of these inventions include: sewing, gluing, riveting, welding, as these fasteners cannot be removed without destroying the fastener thereby preventing reconnection of bag components held by these fasteners. These fasteners may be characterized in that they are not generally comprised of a mating pair. In addition,

15 these fasteners require special tools and skills to rebuild. These fasteners might sometimes be called *permanent* fasteners.

One can more fully appreciate details and advantages of these inventions in consideration of the following discussion directed to component changes undertaken

20 to realize alternative function and style.

FUNCTION

Golf bags presented herein support various function and form easily changed from time-to-time on the user's whim.

Shoulder strap

25 For example, a shoulder strap system may be configured in many ways to support various function. One shoulder strap systems might be arranged and balanced with respect to the connection points to support single shoulder operation.

Conversely, a shoulder strap system may be balanced and configured for a dual shoulder carrying process. Another strap system might be configured with swivel

30 elements in the strap chain to provide for a rolling function whereby the straps are more easily put onto the shoulders by rolling up the arm. A shoulder strap system may be made with the objective of being very light in weight with the understanding that it is sufficient for reduced loading. Another might be well suited for very heavy loads. These functions each are associated with various strap configurations. One

strap may be changed for another when it is desired that the bag serve a different function.

Pocket

Pockets and pocket sets are also provided to address various possible functional objectives. The pocket set shown in Figure 7 is ideal for golfer who find compartment type pockets useful. One pocket for a water bottle, one for cell phone, one for PDA and another each for golf tees, gloves, hat and glasses is possible. Alternatively, a different pocket set is good for different function. A large pocket with a small pocket piggy back as shown in Figure 1 is a very useful combination to serve specific purpose.

Pockets might take a special shape to accommodate certain odd shaped items and still be affixed at an attachment facility as shown and taught in this disclosure. For example, an umbrella might occupy a very long narrow pocket which runs a substantial length of the bag.

Pockets can be securely closed or conversely an open top pouch style for easy access. The precise combination of pockets chosen by the particular golfer is highly variable from one to another. It would be highly unlikely that the precise combination of pockets desired by any one golfer would be found on a standard bag available at a pro shop. With bags of these inventions, not only is the precise configuration of the bag available, but changeable. If a golfers desires change in time, so can the bag change to accommodate.

Stand

Some stands are suitable for most bags however some golfers might choose alternative stand configurations. A stand of very high quality which is lightweight yet supports large loads might be excessively expensive for use as standard equipment. Therefore, a upgrade stand might be a bag add-on component which a golfer would like to change when customizing a bag for a personal preference. Stand legs may also be made shorter or longer to change the tripod orientation and stability in agreement with personal preferences. In this way, the stand component of bags of these inventions are changeable by way of special fasteners.

Chassis

The chassis might also be considered changeable component as well. Although it forms the primary structural member of a bag, it can be replaced and all the other components fastened to a new chassis to support certain function. When a

certain complex coarse or match, perhaps a big travel weekend, calls for a full load of clubs and accessories some chassis are not large enough. Therefore, the chassis may be provide in several sizes. In this way, the chassis may be replaced to address capacity needs.

5

STYLE

The bags presented herein support various looks and style easily changed from time-to-time on the user's desire. Where common golf bags are purchased with a particular look and feel, i.e. one made of dark blue nylon, that bag is necessarily blue throughout its practical lifetime. Barring fading or radical procedures such as dying or bleaching, the bag remains a dark blue bag. To get a new style, a golfer must purchase a new bag.

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One of the most useful features of the bags of these inventions is the wonderful benefit of style changes. These style changes may be brought about via pocket kits packaged and sold separately.

Pocket color kit

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Although leopard skin designs are highly attractive and fashionable, it would be quite boring to have a leopard skin design everyday. Some styles are best used once-in-a-while but are not really so nice as 'everyday designs'. Thus, some fashion conscience golfers might like to purchase kits of color matching pockets and accessories. With only one golf bag and several pocket color kits, one can give the impression of playing with a different bag each day.

25 Pocket theme kit

30

As mentioned, a tournament pocket kit might be given away in promotional efforts by a tournament promoter or equipment manufacturer. While it may be prohibitively expensive to provide tournament bags at all but the most prestigious events, the greatly reduced expense of issuing a pocket kit for certain themes makes the bags of these inventions wonderful tools in support of promotional efforts.

Kits may also support function changes as well. It is possible to devise an 'over capacity kit' including large heavy duty pockets, oversized dual shoulder strap, thick and rugged stand system, et cetera. Similarly, a lightweight kit might have bag

components all in brief versions appropriate for light duty service. A standard bag could be the players default service equipment while on light days where play does not require a full complement of accessories, the lightweight kit of components could be affixed to the bag to make the bag more appropriate for the type of use anticipated.

5

Some of the examples above are directed to specific embodiments which illustrate preferred versions of devices and methods of the invention. In the interests of completeness, a more general description of devices and the elements of which they are comprised is presented herefollowing.

10

One will now fully appreciate how the elements and components of a golf club bag may be changed and replaced to realize new function and style. Although the present invention has been described in considerable detail with clear and concise language and with reference to certain preferred versions thereof including the best mode anticipated by the inventor, other versions are possible. Therefore, the spirit and scope of the invention should not be limited by the description of the preferred versions contained therein, but rather by the claims appended hereto.

15

Claims

What is claimed is:

1) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag comprising: a chassis; at least one attachment facility; at least one pocket or pouch; and a shoulder strap system, said chassis being a cylindrical member having a closed bottom and open top; said at least one pocket or pouch being disposed on the exterior of the bag chassis removably affixed thereto, said shoulder strap system being disposed on the exterior of the bag chassis removably affixed thereto.

2) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 1, said attachment facility further comprising fasteners to removably couple said pockets and said shoulder strap system having mating fasteners.

3) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 2, said fasteners are from the group of fasteners including: hook and loop fasteners, snaps, buckles, clips, removable studs, and mechanical interlocking mechanisms.

4) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 2, said shoulder strap system is further comprised of a wishbone strap configuration and two bag straps, two shoulder pad elements each being removable from the wishbone strap and the bag straps by way of mating buckle fasteners.

5) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 4, said shoulder strap system further is comprised of removable shoulder molds elements which wrap about said padded shoulder strap elements and provide an ergonomic fit to the human shoulder.

6) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 4, said two bag straps and wishbone strap form a three point attachment with respect to said chassis whereby either of said two bag straps or wishbone strap may be replaced by a similar strap.

7) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 5, said shoulder padded shoulder strap elements being changeable by way of a mating pair of buckle fasteners.

8) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 1, further comprising a stand system, said stand system being removably affixed to the bag by way of mechanical interlocking fasteners whereby said stand may be removed from and replaced to said chassis without damaging the fasteners.

9) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 8, said stand system comprise at least two legs, each leg of the stand system being separately removable and replaceable via fasteners which may be operated without tools.

10) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 1, further comprising a back pad, said back pad being removably affixed to the chassis by way of mechanical interlocking fasteners whereby said back pad may be removed from and replaced to said chassis without damage to the fasteners.

11) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 10, said back pad being a molded foam element on a first side of a plastic back featuring stud fasteners integrated therewith on the other side of the plastic back.

12) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 1, said at least one pocket includes a pocket with a colored exterior surface.

13) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 1, said at least one attachment facility includes a system permanently affixed to a bag chassis comprising flap members with a combination of snaps and hook and loop type fasteners in a predetermined arrangement.

- 14) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 13, said at least one pocket has a top strip with mating fasteners arranged to cooperate with the fasteners of said attachment facility.
- 15) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 13, said attachment facility extends along a longitudinal direction of the bag on one side substantially the full extent of the bag and on the other side a partial extent to accommodate back pad in the remaining portion.
- 16) A modular golf club and golf accessory bag of claim 1, said at least one pocket includes at least two pockets, a first pocket having thereon an attachment facility suitable for couple thereto a second pocket to form a piggy-back arrangement.
- 17) A kit of golf bag components including a plurality of pockets having colored exterior surfaces.
- 18) A kit of golf bag components including a plurality of pockets having exterior surfaces with indicia to reflect a particular theme or event.
- 19) A kit of golf bag components including components which are characterized as oversized and high capacity whereby the capacity of the bag may be extended by application of the kit to a golf bag.
- 20) A kit of golf bag components including components which are characterized as brief and lightweight whereby the weight of the bag can be reduced.

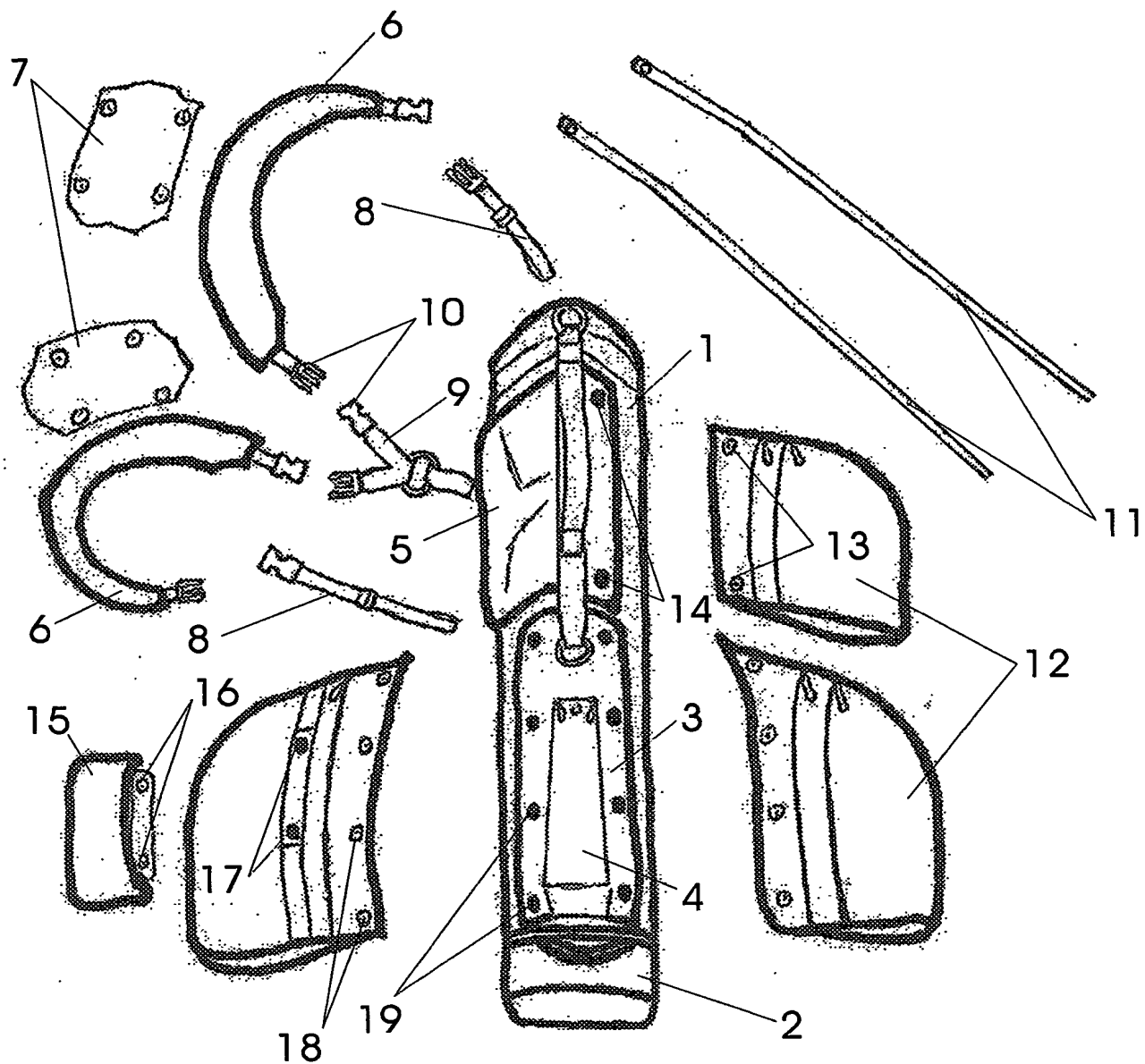


Fig. 1

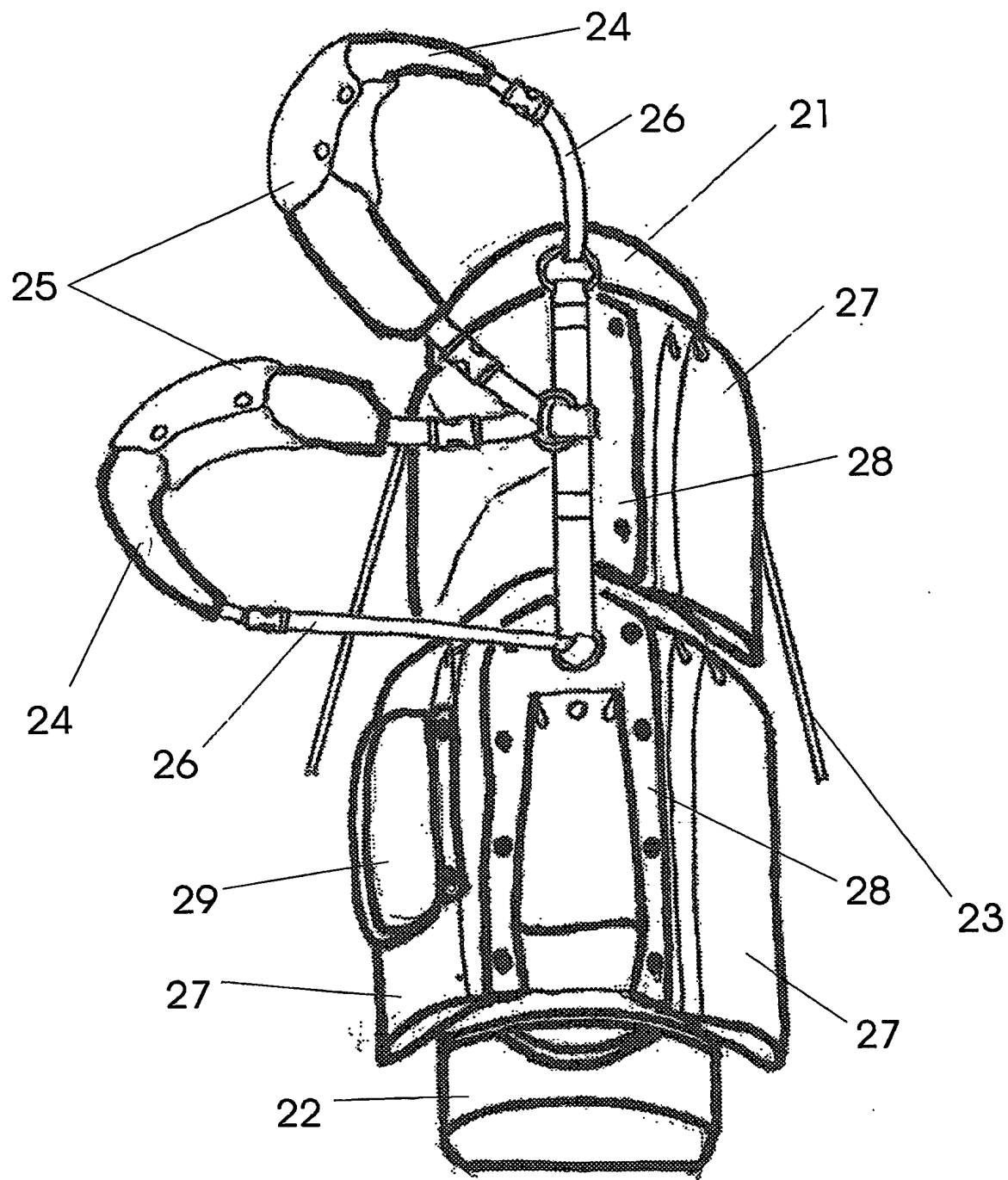


Fig. 2

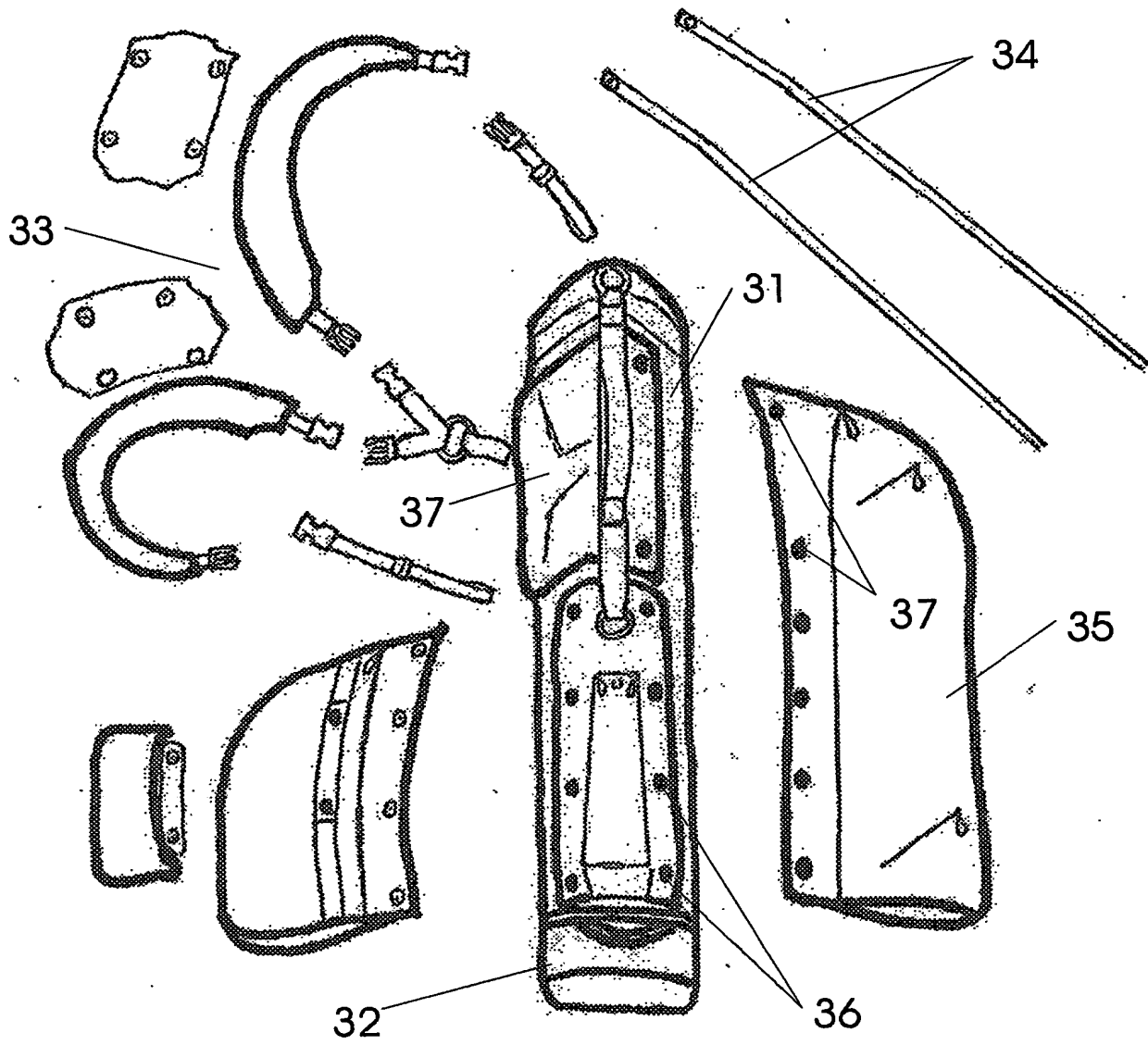


Fig. 3

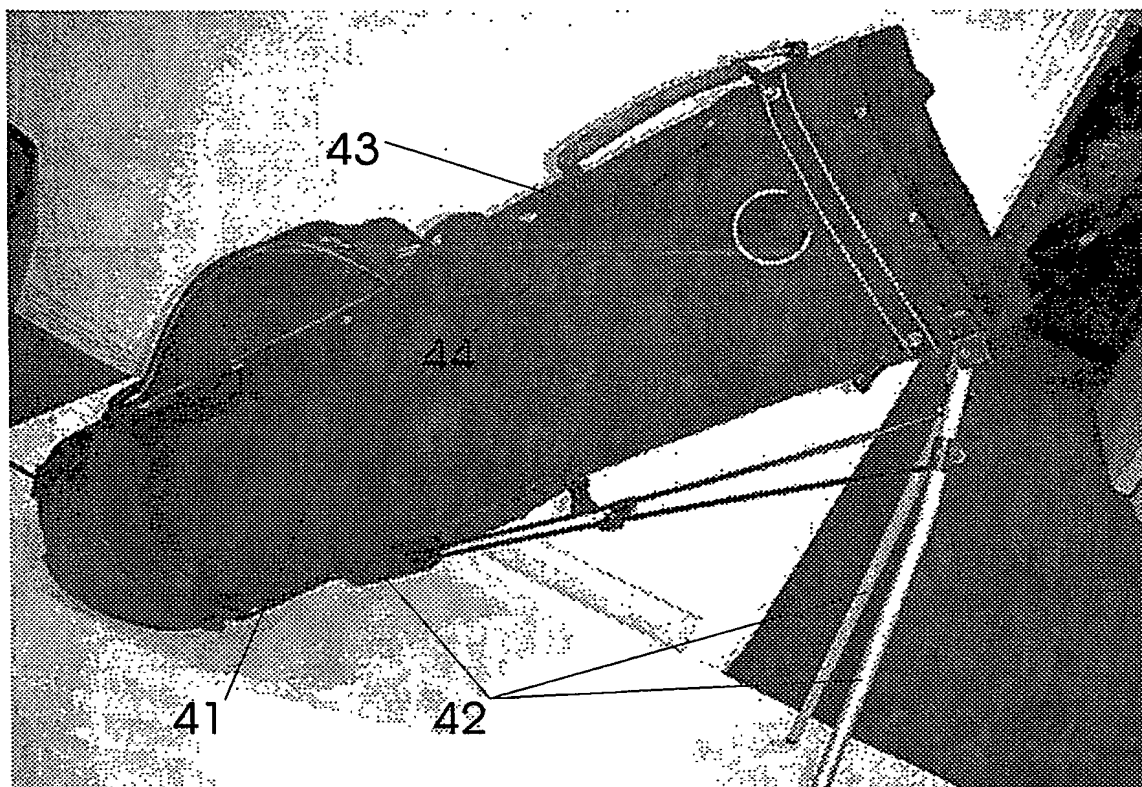


Fig. 4

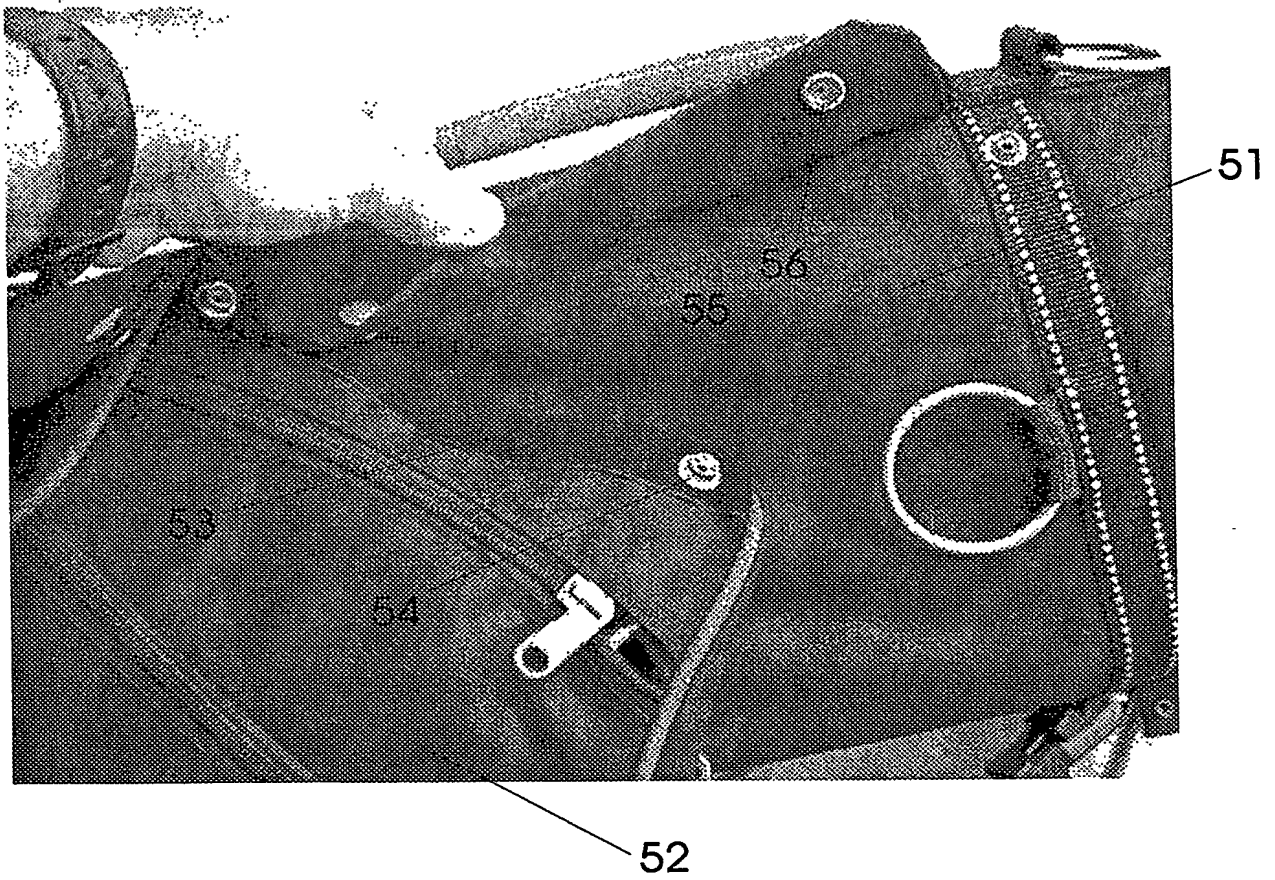


Fig. 5

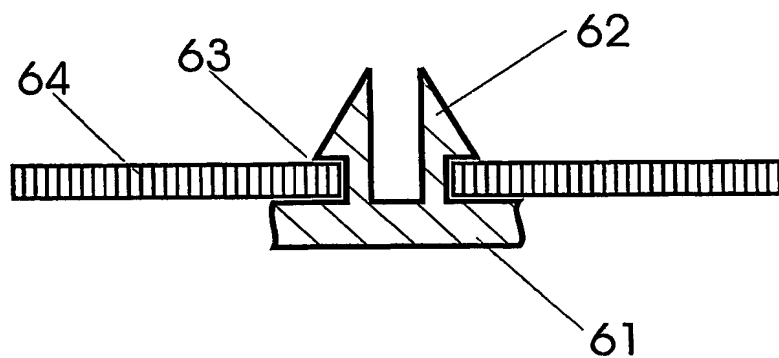


Fig. 6A

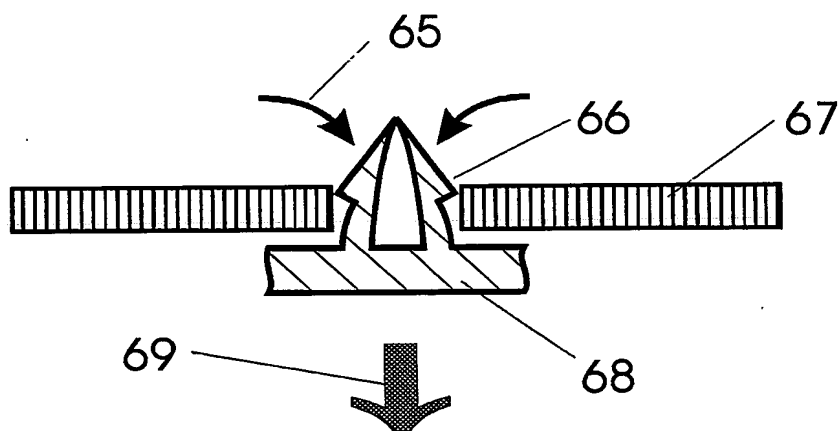


Fig. 6B

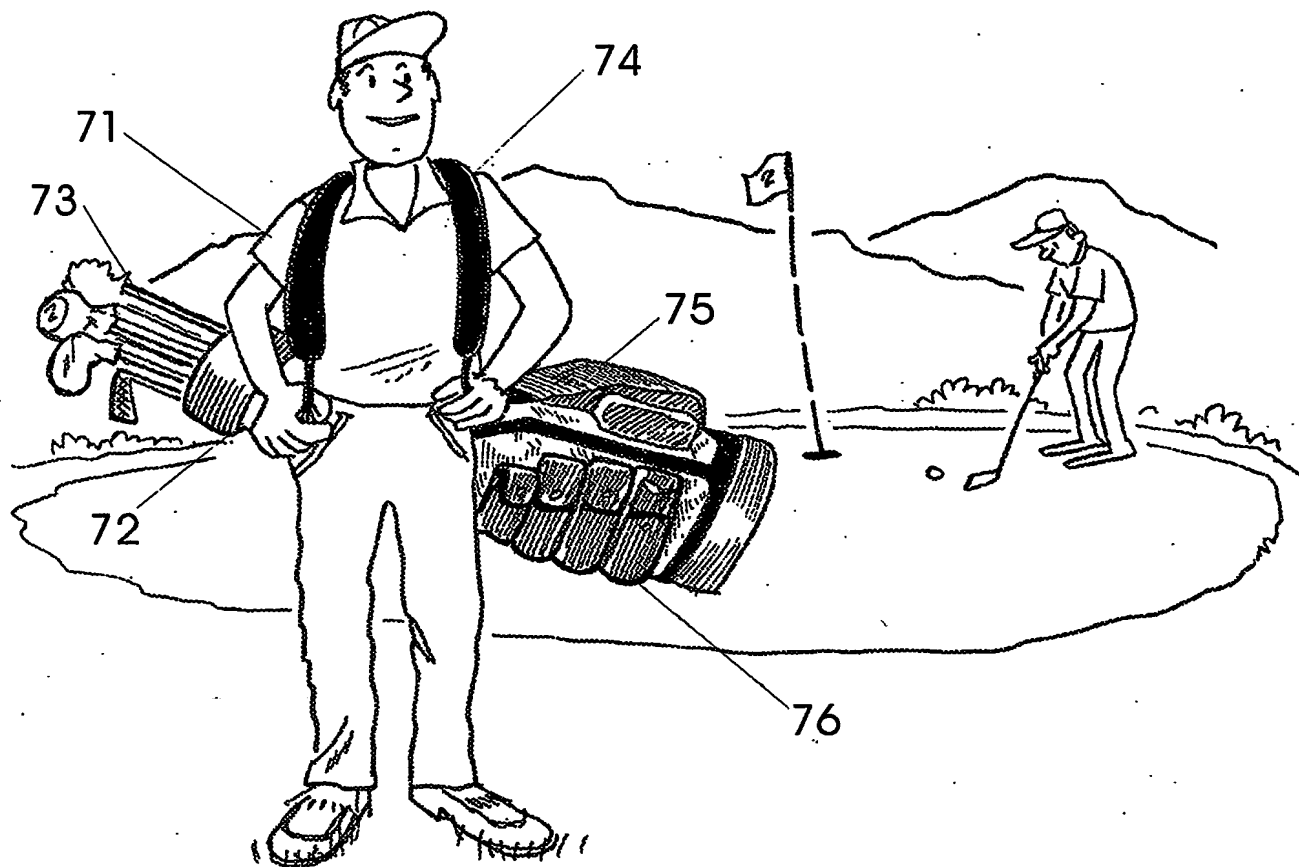


Fig. 7

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US02/15000

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : A63B 55/00, 55/04

US CL : 206/315.3, 315.7, 315.5, 315.8, 315.5

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 206/315.3, 315.7, 315.5, 315.8

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 6,330,944 B1 (DeMICHELE) 18 December 2001 (18.12.2001), see figures.	1-3, 7, 12, 13, 17, 19-20
X	US 4,350,194 A (BROWN) 21 September 1982 (21.09.1982), see figures.	1-16, 18
Y		17, 19, 20
X	US 5,632,496 A (NELSON) 27 May 1997 (05.27.1997), see document.	17, 18
Y	US 5,038,984 A (IZZ0) 13 August 1991 (13.08.1991), see figures.	4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11
Y	US 6,227,503 B1 (SHIAO CHEN) 08 May 2001 (08.05.2001), see description.	8, 9,

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

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"&"

document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

04 October 2002 (04.10.2002)

Date of mailing of the international search report

05 NOV 2002

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